



# Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee Announces 2011 Asian Carp Monitoring and Rapid Response Plan for Illinois Waters**

**\*Satellite uplink coordinates below\***

CHICAGO- The Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee (ACRCC) today released its 2011 Asian Carp Monitoring and Rapid Response Plan (MRRP), outlining an aggressive set of actions to track and remove Asian carp in the Upper Illinois River and the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) to prevent this invasive species from establishing in the Great Lakes.

In 2010, Federal and state partners executed an aggressive, coordinated Asian carp monitoring and sampling strategy, dedicating more than 16,000 hours to surveying and removing Asian carp in more than 200 miles of Illinois waterway. On-the-ground actions ranged from cutting-edge scientific analysis of water samples for Asian carp DNA to intensive use of traditional fishing methods such as electro-fishing and netting. These actions were part of a comprehensive, multi-tiered Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework first released by the Obama Administration in May 2010. The 2011 MRRP summarizes the monitoring results from 2010, continues and intensifies these monitoring and sampling actions to take advantage of new technology, tools and understanding of this invasive species, and outlines a strategy for rapid response in the event an Asian carp is found above the barrier system in the CAWS.

"This plan represents an intensive and collaborative response to Asian carp in Illinois waters and is a key part of the Obama Administration's comprehensive and long term strategy to protect our Great Lakes from Asian carp," said John Goss, Asian Carp Director for the White House Council on Environmental Quality. "By unifying Federal and state action, conducting vigilant monitoring, and developing and using cutting edge technologies, we are ensuring the most coordinated and effective response at all levels to safeguard the health of the Great Lakes and Great Lakes communities."

The 2011 MRRP, which represents an estimated \$7 million Federal investment, is designed with the flexibility to respond to new threats. Project plans can be categorized geographically as occurring either upstream or downstream of the electric dispersal barrier and grouped into the following five categories:

### **MONITORING PROJECTS**

Includes the use of electrofishing and contract commercial fishermen to detect presence and location of

any Asian carp DNA both above and below the barrier; continued use of eDNA to detect potential presence of carp above the barrier; and monitoring for small Asian carp to track where reproduction is occurring.

#### **BARRIER EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATIONS**

Efforts will include the use of telemetry to follow the movements of tagged surrogate species to assess movement near the dispersal barrier and through locks; use of sonar to track fish movement and caged fish to determine the effectiveness of the dispersal barrier; and monitoring for potential Asian carp spawning in the Des Plaines River to assess risk of eggs and larval fish passing through the barrier fence during flood events.

#### **REMOVAL PROJECTS**

Efforts include contracting commercial fishermen to remove Asian carp downstream of the barrier; a rapid response process should any Asian carp be detected upstream of the dispersal barrier; and suppressing Asian carp during maintenance of the electric dispersal barriers.

#### **TECHNOLOGY EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

Efforts will evaluate efficiency and detection probability of technology currently in use for Asian carp monitoring, develop enhancements, and generate ideas for development of new approaches for capturing or repelling small populations of Asian carp.

#### **ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY SURVEILLANCE**

Efforts will include expanded education and enforcement activities at locations where live fish would most likely be transported and continued surveillance efforts.

MRRP projects for 2011 also include developing and testing hydroguns that emit high-pressure underwater sound waves to repel Asian carp.

“This plan demonstrates the ACRCC’s ongoing commitment to advance new monitoring and response activities to continue to address the threat of Asian carp. We will continue to assess all of the potential threats posed by Asian carp and are prepared to take further action, if warranted,” said Illinois Department of Natural Resources Assistant Director John Rogner.

“The plan expands on the monitoring and fieldwork that was undertaken last year and incorporates all the lessons learned. We continue to incorporate new technology, such as sonic detection and hydroacoustics, that will help to ensure that the monitoring efforts achieve maximum success,” said Charlie Wooley, Deputy Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Midwest Region.

“The Corps has been participating in monitoring efforts with our partners to determine the leading edge of Asian carp in the Illinois waterways and for early-detection surveillance in the Chicago Area Waterway System. These efforts have included the use of eDNA, telemetry, underwater cameras, electro-fishing and other traditional methods. The Army Corps of Engineers will continue to work with our partners in the ACRCC in these aggressive sampling efforts that provide important data necessary to inform barrier operations and other Asian carp efforts,” said Col. Vincent Quarles, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District.

The threat from Asian carp has generated an urgent and committed government response. In addition to aggressive monitoring and sampling, the ACRCC has proactively worked to contain Asian carp in the CAWS by constructing a third electric barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, constructing a 13-

mile physical barrier along the Des Plaines River to prevent fish bypass during flooding, and conducting research focused on control technology and methods that can be tailored and applied to control Asian carp.

The MRRP targets the Upper Illinois River and Chicago Area Waterway System, the Asian carp pathway of greatest concern. The Obama Administration also remains focused on preventing Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes through all possible pathways. The ACRCC released an “Other Pathways” study in December 2010 to identify and close off other potential aquatic pathways where Asian carp could enter the Great Lakes basin; constructed a 1,500 foot fish barrier fence at Eagle Marsh in Indiana to prevent fish from migrating from the Wabash River into the Great Lakes watershed; and continues to develop the Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study to assess threats throughout the basin, including in the CAWS.

The Obama Administration formed the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee in 2009 to ensure coordinated and comprehensive action against Asian carp. The ACRCC is led by the White House Council on Environmental Quality and includes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation and all eight Great Lakes states, as well as the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, and the City of Chicago.

For more information on the 2011 MRRP, 2010 actions, or to view the entire 2011 Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework, visit: [www.asiancarp.org](http://www.asiancarp.org).

**Satellite Coordinates:**

Slug: ACRCC Boat Tour

Date: 5/23/11

Time: 4:45 PM (CT) – 5:00 PM (CT)

Satellite: AMC 15KU

Transponder: 01

Slot: D9

Downlink Frequency: 11733.5

Downlink Polarization: V

Bandwidth: 9 MHz

Symbol Rate: 3.978729

FEC: 3 / 4

Data Rate: 5.5

For technical assistance please call The Illinois Information Service at 217.785.5499.